

# Clinton, Schumer, Lautenberg, Menendez, Nadler, Maloney and Fossella Announce Enactment in Law of \$108 Million to Expand Health Coverage for 9/11 Emergency Responders and Others

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Funding Comes as Thousands of Patients are Seeking Treatment for 9/11 Related Illnesses, with Numbers Rising

Funds to Expand Treatment to Residents, Office and Commercial Workers, Students, and Other Individuals

Washington, DC &ndash; Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton, Charles Schumer, Frank Lautenberg, and Robert Menendez, along with Representatives Jerrold Nadler, Carolyn Maloney, and Vito Fossella today announced that the FY2008 Omnibus Appropriations bill signed into law by the President Wednesday includes an additional \$108 million in federal funding to address the mounting health needs of those individuals who were exposed to environmental hazards released as a result of the September 11, 2001 attacks upon the World Trade Center. The money builds on the \$50 million that was provided in the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Bill that was signed into law earlier this year, bringing total funding for the year to \$158 million.

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The latest funding increase was signed into law as part of the Fiscal Year 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill and includes \$51.5 million in the Fiscal Year 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS) Appropriations Bill and \$56.5 million in additional emergency spending.

&ldquo;I am so proud that this critically needed funding is finally on the way to those who need it. Thousands of responders, residents, workers and others continue to suffer the devastating health effects of 9/11. This funding will help sustain the 9/11 health programs while we work on a bipartisan, long-term solution in the Senate,&rdquo; said Senator Clinton.

"It is high time that the first responders and residents of Lower Manhattan that were exposed to toxins six years ago receive the treatment they need and deserve. I am pleased that this essential funding for the men and women who are now suffering from the effects of the attacks has been approved, and promise to continue to fight for the full funding they need," said Senator Schumer.

&ldquo;First responders, emergency workers and volunteers showed true courage during the recovery effort after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Now, many of these brave men and women are suffering serious illnesses from the toxins at Ground Zero. This funding is a welcome first step to finally help these heroes get the treatment they deserve,&rdquo; said Senator Lautenberg

Senator Menendez said, &ldquo;This is the type of federal commitment that puts the mantra &lsquo;We will never forget&rsquo; into action, and it&rsquo;s the type of commitment that had been lacking in previous Congresses. With major investments in the health of those who inhaled the toxic air around Ground Zero, we can help address the needs of all those who deserve their government's attention and resources, whether they developed symptoms in the days after

9/11 or in the years after 9/11. Moving forward, we cannot rest until all of those who inhaled the toxic dust around Ground Zero are examined and those found to be sick are treated."

"This landmark funding is a tremendous step toward caring for those who — six years later — are still suffering as a result of the 9/11 attacks on our nation," said Congressman Nadler. "As Abraham Lincoln said, we must 'care for him who shall have borne the battle.' We must also continue fighting for comprehensive health benefits for all those who have become sick as a result of the collapse of the World Trade Center, whether they be first responders, local residents, office workers, or students. And we must ensure a full and proper clean-up of all affected areas, so that no more innocent people will be harmed by the environmental scars of 9/11."

"I am glad the President has finally approved the needed health care funding for first responders exposed to toxins at Ground Zero, and for the first time that funding can go to help lower Manhattan residents, workers and students. Now, his administration must explain why it stopped the effort to provide health care for first responders from outside the New York area. Those who came from every state to help New York in its time of need now need help themselves," said Congresswoman Maloney.

"This funding will finally provide medical monitoring and treatment to all the unsung heroes of 9/11, including 9/11 responders, area workers, residents and others. It is also an important step forward in fulfilling our responsibility to help all those who are sick today as well as those who become ill in the future," said Congressman Vito Fossella.

The \$108 million in new funding will go towards monitoring and treatment activities administered by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to help those individuals who were exposed to the environmental hazards released on and after 9/11. The \$51.5 million portion in the Fiscal Year 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS) Appropriations Bill also includes statutory language requiring the Department of Health and Human Services, through NIOSH, to expand the program beyond responders and rescue workers to entities that would provide services to residents, office and commercial workers, students, and other individuals who were exposed. Existing programs to serve those who were impacted include the centers in the Mount Sinai Consortium and the program run by the New York City Fire Department.

The lawmakers said that the approved funding is a recognition of the importance of addressing the short and long-term health needs of those individuals who were exposed to the environmental hazards released as a result of the September 11, 2001 attacks upon the World Trade Center, and affirms the commitment of the federal government to provide assistance to those whose physical and mental health was adversely impacted as a result of this exposure. More than six years after the attacks, persistent health effects have been documented among rescue and recovery workers, such as asthma, chronic sinusitis, and gastrointestinal conditions. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and other health effects have also been diagnosed among those who have been exposed.

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